

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

A 1. (Currently Amended) A method for directory assistance in response to a call from a caller, the method comprising:

receiving the call;

determining if the call is a request for directory assistance and, if not, routing the call as dialed through a call routing telecommunications network;

if the call is a request for directory assistance, routing the call through an intelligent service peripheral to a speech recognizer, the intelligent service peripheral being separate from the call routing telecommunications network;

in the intelligent service peripheral, determining the type of directory assistance requested;

if the caller is not requesting business directory assistance, routing the call through the telecommunications network to a call center;

if the caller is requesting business directory assistance, automatically determining at least one telephone number satisfying the caller request without communication through the call routing telecommunications network by searching in a directory database associated with the intelligent service peripheral, thereby limiting use of the call routing telecommunications network.

2. (Original) A method for directory assistance as in claim 1 wherein the caller requests business information by business name.

3. (Original) A method for directory assistance as in claim 1 wherein the caller requests business information by business category.

4. (Original) A method for directory assistance as in claim 1 wherein determining at least one telephone number is based on the location of the caller.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for directory assistance as in claim 1 further comprising:

querying the caller for automatic connection; and

A if the caller requests automatic connection, routing the call through the telecommunications network to a selected connection number.

6. (Original) A method for directory assistance as in claim 1 further comprising:

determining that the caller is having problems automatically obtaining business directory assistance; and

routing the call to a call center.

7. (Original) A method for directory assistance as in claim 6 further comprising supplying the call center with information about caller activity.

8. (Original) A method for directory assistance as in claim 1 wherein determining if the call is a request for directory assistance is based on a dialing pattern entered by the caller.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for providing directory assistance without using a call routing network for business directory assistance, wherein a call for directory assistance is routed to a speech recognizer to determine the type of assistance requested, wherein the speech recognizer is separate from the call routing network, and, if the request is for business information, automatically retrieving requested business directory assistance information by searching in a directory database associated with the intelligent service peripheral without communication through the call routing network, otherwise routing the call through the routing network to a call center.

10. (Currently Amended) A system for directory assistance comprising:

A at least one switch for routing incoming calls to either an intelligent service peripheral or a call routing network, the switch determining if an incoming call is a request for directory assistance, routing requests for directory assistance to the intelligent service peripheral and routing non-requests for directory assistance to the call routing network, thereby limiting use of the call routing telecommunications network;

a database holding business directory information;

at least one call center; and

a speech recognizer associated with the intelligent service peripheral and in communication with the at least one switch, the database and the at least one call center, the speech recognizer determining if the request for directory assistance is for business information and, if so, accessing the database to satisfy the request, otherwise routing the call to the call center.

11. (Original) A system for directory assistance as in claim 10 wherein the speech recognizer satisfies the request based on receiving a business name.

12. (Original) A system for directory assistance as in claim 10 wherein the speech recognizer satisfies the request based on receiving a business category.

13. (Original) A system for directory assistance as in claim 10 wherein the speech recognizer satisfies the request based on location of a caller placing the request.

14. (Original) A system for directory assistance as in claim 10 wherein the speech recognizer queries a caller placing the request to connect to a number satisfying the request.

15. (Original) A system for directory assistance as in claim 10 wherein the speech recognizer routes a caller placing the request to a call center if the caller is experiencing a problem.

A 16. (Original) A system for directory assistance as in claim 15 wherein the speech recognizer sends information about caller activity to the call center.

17. (Original) A system for directory assistance as in claim 10 wherein determining if an incoming call is a request for directory assistance is based on a dialing pattern entered by a caller.

18. (Canceled)
